

How to Read a Book! (for research) 😊

1. Why did you decide to pick up this particular book?

2. Let's get down some basics about the book:

Title: _____

Year of publication: _____

Author (or Editor): _____

⇒ **List a couple of things you can tell about the author from the book jacket or the “about the author” section at the front or back of the book.**

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3. Is there an introduction by the author or someone else?.

Skim at least a few pages of the introduction - or of the first chapter, if that's more helpful. Then write down a key sentence or 2 that tells what the book is about:

4. Take a look at the book's index. (If there's no index, skip to #5 and find two stories rather than just one.)

Helpful tips:

- An italicized page includes one or more pictures.
- Hyphenated pages (e.g., 155-167) indicate a section that probably holds a lot of material on one particular topic.

⇒ **Turn to one of the sections from the index that looks interesting, and write down a fact or quotation you like (with page number in parentheses).**

5. Find an interesting story.

- In the Table of Contents, look for a chapter that seems to have an interesting topic, and flip to that chapter. Then, look for a *story* that seems intriguing about someone or something. It won't always be at the beginning of the chapter. From there, read a little bit more before or after the story (a page or two) to get context.
- If this doesn't work, try looking in the Table of Contents again.
- Usually by the second or third try, you will find a story that lights you up and leads somewhere new.

Describe in a couple of sentences what the story is about (include page #s):

6. Wrap it up and reflect!

Answer any or all of these questions in a couple of sentences total. Feel free to go on the back.

- What topic of research paper would this book be most useful for? Be specific.
- How could you use this book if you were writing a paper about a reformer?
- Did this book end up being what you expected, or was it something different from what you expected?